The Mirror Image of Civil War Memory

Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis in Popular Prints

Harold Holzer
Metropolitan Museum of Art
New York City

Seventeenth R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture
Delivered at Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1996

The Lincoln Museum

is a memorial tribute to the life and contributions of Abraham Lincoln. The lecture series honors Dr. R. Gerald McMurtry, the second director of the museum. Each year a distinguished Lincoln scholar will be invited to Fort Wayne to present a paper on some aspect of the Lincoln theme.

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The Seventeenth R. Gerald McMurtry Lecture
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The Civil War, as the title to a long-forgotten wartime print portrait reminds us (*Figure 1*), was above all a "trial by battle." But the very existence of such an image, showing the commanders-in-chief of the Union and the Confederacy confronting each other with swords—an image that reduced the entire conflict to a personal fight between two representative heads of state—reminds us that the Civil War was a war of art, too.

No other war had ever been so well-illustrated. From the outset, gifted military and marine painters depicted its battles and leaders. Illustrated news weeklies sent "special artists" to the front to make sketches that could quickly be copied and published in the press. And for the first time, photographers, too, covered the war, sending home horrifying records, if not of the battles themselves, at least of their grisly aftermath. But no other medium produced so many depictions of the Civil War and its leaders, in so many variations, for so many tastes, as did that of popular prints.

IS COTTON
KING?
For one or both of us the time is come,
If Slavery is fit to live, let Freedom fall.
TRIAL BY BATTLE.
Oh, ho if that's the case come on, Old Link
And down with him who first cries ... Hold!

Figure 1 E. B. & E. C. Kellogg, *Trial by Battle*. Lithograph, Hartford, Connecticut, ca. 1861. (The Lincoln Museum)

Paintings may have boasted finer art, but access to them was limited to the rich patrons who commissioned them, or to audiences who lived near the large cities where they might temporarily be exhibited. Not until five years *after* the Civil War did two such cities, New York and Boston, create the nation's very first art museums, chartered specifically to make such works available at last to a wide public. No such access to wartime art was provided while the war itself was being fought.

As for the sketches reproduced regularly in *Harper's Weekly*, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Weekly*, or the *Southern Illustrated News*, most were hastily engraved, printed on cheap paper, and quickly discarded. Photography might boast both realism and permanence, but the most widely used format of the era, the *carte-de-visite*, was small in size, and specifically designed to be hidden away, most of the time, between the covers of the family album.

Only popular prints could reach a wide public, achieve relative immediacy, and earn permanent display in one of the most sacred

settings in American culture: the parlor wall of the family home. Even before the war, prints of American political heroes had begun replacing religious icons of old as symbols of a family's taste, patriotism, and political affiliation. As early as 1811, a Russian visitor to the United States marveled: "Every American considers it his sacred duty to have a likeness of Washington in his home, just as we have images of God's saints."[1] By war's end, the New York lithographers Currier & Ives could confidently boast: "Pictures have become a necessity, and the price at which they can be retailed is so low, that everybody can afford to buy them."[2] By the dawn of the Civil War era, the walls of thousands of American homes bore witness to the beliefs of those who lived within.

Of course, we do not decorate our homes with politicians' faces today. In our own era—which boasts nothing short of image bombardment from the likes of C-Span, CNN, and *People*, and which has brought us Polaroid film, camcorders and "America's Funniest Home Videos"—the only formal portraits that adorn our walls, aside from family pictures, tend to depict rock stars, actors, ballplayers, and *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit models. Mercifully, these are usually relegated to teenagers' bedrooms, not living rooms.

It is understandably hard for modern Americans to appreciate an era in which images were rare and prized, and in which political beliefs were so boldly and publicly illustrated at home. But such was the degree of reverence audiences held for both pictures and politicians at the precise moment when two men, born eight months and less than a hundred miles apart, each took oaths of office declaring themselves American presidents. The inaugurations of Abraham Lincoln in the North, and Jefferson Davis in the South, launched not only a war between the states, but a war between presidential images that was to last as long as the guns fired, and beyond, into the quest for national memory.

Trial By Battle (Figure 1) might be described as an early skirmish from that war of images. To be sure, it is a pro-Union print, the work of E. B. & E. C. Kellogg of Hartford, Connecticut. The setting, discernible from the Capitol dome in the background, is

Lincoln's Washington. Lincoln is shown backed by a rather absurd-looking American eagle that is somehow dressed in a Revolutionary War uniform and gripping an American flag. Jefferson Davis is being jeered by an African-American who thumbs his nose while trampling on a Confederate flag. The only dissent comes from the clichéd caricature of a disloyal Irishman, a stock figure often found in wartime prints attacking Democrats. But his lack of solidarity with the Union is attributed to the whiskey that rests on the barrel alongside him.

What makes this lithograph unique is that it depicts Lincoln and Davis doing direct battle against one another—brandishing swords in the manner of ancient gladiators. It was the first and last print ever to so portray them (the only other known example survives only in the rough draft submitted to the Library of Congress for copyright). Perhaps because Davis seemed to many observers Lincoln's superior in dignity, many Northern printmakers grew reluctant to compare them directly. If one looks closely, the print hints at how different their images were. For Lincoln has been given an advantage. In his left hand he holds a second weapon: an ax. The printmaker surely did not intend to suggest that Honest Abe was fighting unfairly, clutching two weapons to Davis's one. He was merely arming the character with one of the familiar symbolic props that had been employed in earlier campaign prints to help introduce him to the public: the tools of the railsplitter who had risen to prominence from frontier obscurity.

Such accouterments remained staples of Lincoln imagery for years, and set him distinctly apart from his more rigidly formal Confederate counterpart, whom one biographer called "the aristocratic type of Southern politician."[3] Endearing frontier symbols identified Lincoln as a man of, by, and for the people. Yet surprisingly, they did not give Lincoln an automatic image advantage over Davis—at least not at first. Only after Lincoln was credited with liberating the slaves, rewarded with re-election, and transformed into a national martyr, would his image fully overcome the challenge from his Confederate counterpart. There were always *more* prints of Lincoln than of Davis in circulation, if only

because Union printmakers continued churning out graphics long after Confederate presses were stilled. But volume alone does not guarantee predominance. Otherwise the Union side would have won the war between images—not to mention the War Between the States—within months.

Trial by Battle in a sense ushered in a long war of mirror presidential images between America's two Civil War presidents. Just as Lincoln declares in the caption to this print, "For one or both of us the time is come." For a surprisingly long time, at least in the graphic arts, the time was decidedly ripe for both.

Perhaps nothing helped more to shield the early Davis image than the fact that he was virtually anointed president of the Confederacy. He neither fought for nomination at a party convention, nor competed for votes in a national election. Some scholars have suggested that it was precisely Davis's lack of experience in campaigning among the people that made him an insensitive leader once installed in the presidency.[4]

But standing above the fray helped Davis seem more dignified. He did not seek office; it sought him. So he had conducted an 1852 race for Senator, remaining in Washington "...drinking champagne," in the words of his rival, while his challenger traveled 3,200 miles and gave 115 speeches. (Davis lost, and had to wait five more years to return to the Senate.) To the prospect of assuming the Confederate presidency in 1861 he could say, with credible Washingtonian modesty: "I had no desire to be...President. When the suggestion was made to me, I expressed a decided objection...against being placed in that position." It was not lost on many that like Washington himself, in true Cincinnatus fashion, Davis had to be summoned to duty.[5]

Lincoln was granted no such coronation. In his own race for the United States Senate back in 1858, he had conducted the most public campaign in his state's history. A dark horse for the Republican presidential nomination two years later, he had come from behind to defeat the favorites on the third ballot. He did not campaign directly for the presidency in 1860, but no one doubt-

ed that the taste was in his mouth a little. And unlike Davis, who was virtually unopposed and certainly unelected, Lincoln faced three rivals in the campaign of 1860.

Thus, his earliest images introduced him as a figure of contention. Sensing an audience among those who opposed him, the same printmakers who published idealized portraits also contributed critical lampoons. A typical campaign caricature by Currier & Ives might dress him in a homespun shirt and arm him with a log rail to remind viewers of his humble origins and imply that if Lincoln could rise, so could any ordinary American. But the print would also burden him with unpopular viewpoints, in one example suggesting that he so favored black equality that he regarded a well-known Barnum attraction of the day, the half-human "What Is It," as "a worthy successor to carry out the policy which I shall inaugurate."

Of course, many early prints introduced Lincoln more flatteringly. It comes as no surprise that Lincoln particularly liked one lithograph by Edward Mendel of Chicago. It was based on a photograph that his wife admired, and more importantly, it placed him alongside a bust of George Washington, the first ever to do so. Lincoln acknowledged a presentation copy of this print with a letter calling it a "*truthful* Lithograph portrait of myself"—underlining the word "truthful." It was no accident that a print identifying him with the idolized Washington elicited such rare praise from Lincoln. As an artist of the day put it, Washington's image seemed "grand and imposing...calculated for public buildings." Aspiring presidents yearned to identify themselves with their illustrious predecessor, perhaps imagining grand public displays of their own images in the future. Lincoln and Davis were no exceptions, and in a way, their four-year-long competition for image supremacy became, above all, a symbolic struggle in pictures to claim a direct connection to George Washington.[6]

It was a struggle, it is important to remember, that neither had the power to control; such was the nature of 19th-century commercial printmaking. Had Lincoln and Davis themselves, or their

political friends, enjoyed the ability to craft pictures of their own design, or had it been common at the time for political parties to commission the images they wanted—as they do routinely today—our archives would be littered with early pictures showing Lincoln and Davis alongside Washington. But in mid-19th-Century America, prints were created by independent, bi-partisan publishers, not politicians. They echoed, sometimes anticipated, public taste and demand. And they truly reflected the ebb and flow of popular opinion about their subjects, and perhaps influenced it as well.

Lincoln thus arrived in prints as a figure of controversy. As often as he was portrayed in straightforward portraiture in 1860, he was seen as well in critical caricatures, perhaps scrambling with other divisive politicians to tear apart the United States itself. By the time he was elected, Lincoln was encumbered with innumerable, vividly illustrated negative images. Even the most positive pictures—those that identified him as a railsplitter and flatboatman—seemed somehow un-presidential once he was elected. But then, Lincoln outsmarted the image-makers by discarding completely his image as frontier railsplitter. He did so when he grew the famous beard that transformed "Honest Old Abe" overnight into "Father Abraham," even if it forced printmakers to rush out hastily updated pictures with sometimes bizarre-looking whiskers slapped onto old designs.

So firmly was his pre-presidential image etched onto the public consciousness, that citizens at first barely recognized the "new" Lincoln. En route to his inauguration, he stopped at Albany, New York, where his much-anticipated arrival elicited only a "faint" cheer, noted a surprised Henry Villard. The journalist realized that "Lincoln... adorned with huge whiskers, looked so unlike the hale, smooth shaven, red-cheeked individual who is represented upon the popular prints [that] the people did not recognize him." The date was February 18, 1861—the same day that Jefferson Davis was inaugurated provisional president of the Confederate States of America.[7]

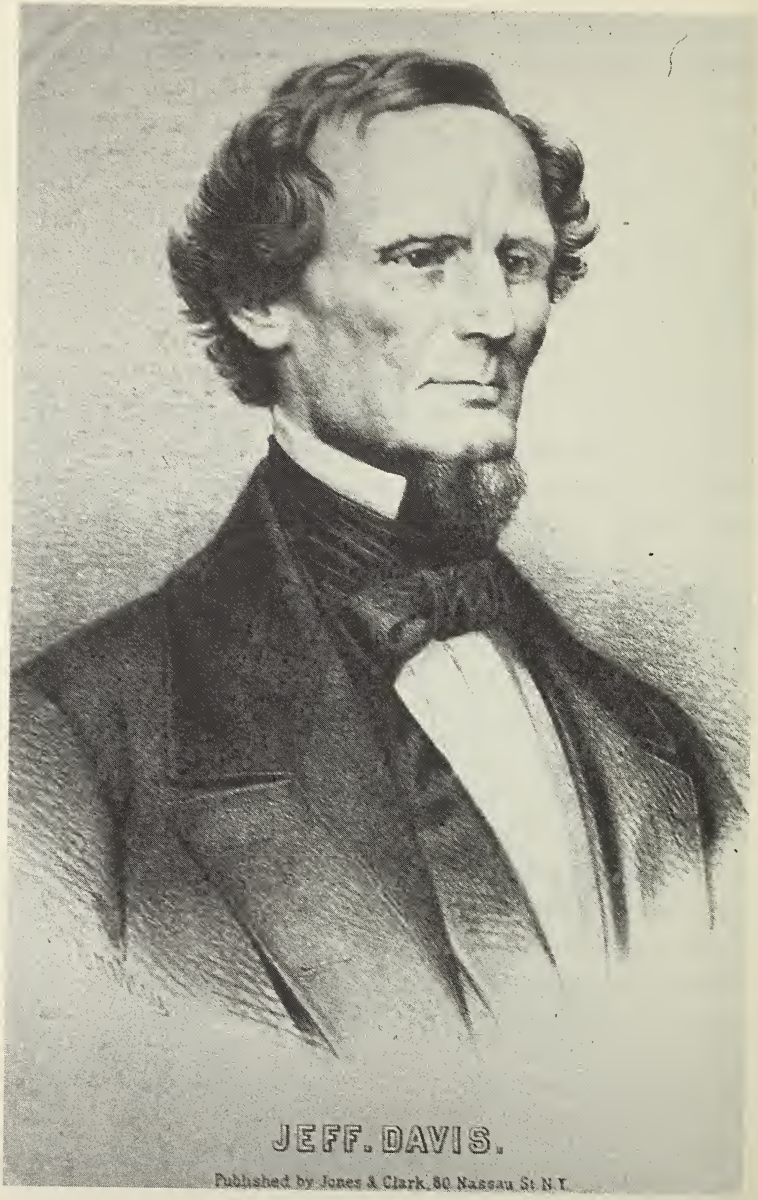

Figure 2 E[rnest] Crehen, *Jeff. Davis*. Lithograph, published by Jones & Clark, New York, ca. 1861. (Lincoln Memorial University)

Davis had proceeded to his inauguration, depicted later in a print aptly titled *The Starting Point of the Great War Between the States*, much as Lincoln had: giving impromptu speeches. "On my way," Davis later recalled, in typically dry language, "...brief addresses were made at various places, at which there were temporary stoppages of the train, in response to calls from the crowds assembled at each point."[8]

Lincoln had much the same experience, but in his wonderful description—he always expressed himself much more vividly than Davis—when not too "tuckered out" he would speak wherever "the iron horse stops to water himself." On one such occasion, in Thorntown, Indiana, he began a long, funny story only to have the train lurch out of town before "the laugh came in," as the press put it. The villagers obligingly followed Lincoln's train to the next town, where they got to hear the end of the joke. Such folksy displays alarmed Charles Francis Adams, for one, who lamented that Lincoln's inaugural journey rhetoric had put "to flight all notions of greatness."[9]

But the worst was yet to come. Convinced by bodyguards that an assassination plot awaited him in hostile Baltimore, Lincoln ignored what he called "fear of ridicule," and agreed to rush through the city in secret. He had a new brand-new top hat, but set it aside. Instead, he admitted, "I put on an old overcoat that I had with me [and] a soft wool hat the likes of which I had never worn...in my life." Changing trains in the dead of night, he sped south, as he put it, "without being recognized by strangers, for I was not the same man." Only later did Lincoln come to regret "stealing into the capital like a thief in the night," although to one visitor he would stubbornly insist: "It ain't best to run a risk of any consequence for look's sake."[10]

Lincoln paid an enormous price for his caution. The Charleston *Mercury* sneered: "Everybody here is disgusted at this cowardly and undignified entry."[11] And the disgust only increased when an artist for the *Illustrated London News* suggested that Lincoln had fled Baltimore in a far more ridiculous disguise, wearing a mili-

tary cape and a Scottish tam for a hat.

Within weeks, picture weeklies like *Harper's* were filled with caricatures like *The Flight of Abraham*, showing the president-elect sneaking into Washington, or dancing the "MacLincoln Highland Fling" in a feathered hat and kilts. Never had an American president begun his administration shackled with so humiliating a public image. And while the artist Thomas Nast dutifully sketched the March 4, 1861 ceremonies in Washington for adaptation in the *New York Illustrated News*, it comes as little surprise that Lincoln's swearing-in, unlike Davis's, did not inspire a single known separate sheet display print for the American home. Such was the sorry state of Lincoln's image on assuming the presidency.

Almost mercifully, Lincoln would soon thereafter be eclipsed in the realm of Union image-making, with the emergence of new heroes like Major Robert Anderson of Fort Sumter, and early martyrs like Colonel Elmer Ephraim Ellsworth, the first Union officer killed in the war. Public curiosity about new wartime celebrities ran so high in the North that New York lithographers Jones & Clark issued a series of prints depicting *Confederate* leaders—among them, a handsome portrait of Jefferson Davis *(Figure 2)* himself. No similar picture was ever published in the Confederacy to introduce Lincoln to Southerners. But the Jones & Clark lithograph turned out to be the first as well as the only Union-made print portrait of Jefferson Davis. No printmaker thereafter dared to invite public wrath in the North by sympathetically portraying the leader of the South.

Perhaps the most effective images of Lincoln early in the war were group portraits that reminded viewers that he was heir to a tradition that went back to Washington himself—the American presidency. As historian Noble Cunningham has put it:

> Popular prints offering portraits of all the presidents in a grand design not only celebrated the presidency but also subordinated individual presidents to the institution of the presidency.

Figure 3 Currier & Ives, *President Lincoln at Genl. Grant's Headquarters at City Point, Va. March 1865*. Lithograph, New York, 1865. (The Lincoln Museum)

Cunningham stressed that such attitudes allowed Americans to criticize individual presidents "without threatening the presidency" itself. But in Lincoln's case, prints placing him among his predecessors allowed him to be associated usefully with presidential tradition at a time when the presidency and the Union itself were both under siege.[12]

Davis, however, fared at least as well as Lincoln in early images stressing connection to George Washington. In the total absence of a similar presidential tradition in the new Confederacy, Davis became, just like Washington, the first President of a new nation. He quickly emerged in Confederate iconography as Washington's only true heir: the father of his own new country. Hoyer & Ludwig of Richmond responded with a handsome portrait pointedly titled *Jefferson Davis/ First President of the Confederate States of America*, and A. Blackmar & Brothers of New Orleans contributed an illustrated cover for sheet music called *Our First*

Figure 4 [Printmaker unknown], [*Jefferson Davis and His Generals*]. Lithograph, published by Goupil et cie., Paris, and Michael Knoedler, New York, ca. 1861. (Library of Congress)

President Quickstep. For Southerners, such images could not help but neatly illustrate what the Richmond *Enquirer* reported in 1861: "The confidence manifested in our President...shows that the mantle of Washington falls gracefully upon his shoulders. Never were a people more enraptured with their Chief Magistrate than ours with President Davis."[13]

Davis enjoyed yet another similarity to Washington with which Lincoln could not hope to compete: military tradition. "By preference," he always insisted, "I was a soldier." In his postwar autobiography he went further, explaining that he did not feel "well suited to the office" of president because, "I thought myself better adapted to command in the field; Mississippi had given me the position which I preferred to any other—the highest rank in her army." Writing to a delegate to the Montgomery convention in 1861, Davis admitted he had little confidence in his "capacity" to serve as president. "I think," he hastened to add, "I could per-

form the functions of genl." Indeed, Davis seems to have accepted the presidency believing it was only "temporary," insisting: "I expected soon to be with the army of Mississippi." Impressed by his "military bearing" and "martial aspect," Richmond matrons like Constance Cary Harrison were convinced that Davis felt "quite out of place in the office of President... in the midst of such a war.... His own inclination was to be with the army."[14]

Like Davis, Lincoln had seen his first—and in Lincoln's case, his only—military service in the Black Hawk War. But there the similarity ended. Davis attended West Point and achieved glory at Monterey and Buena Vista in a war with Mexico that young Congressman Lincoln opposed. As president, Lincoln eventually assumed active management of the Union war effort. But though he was depicted in councils of war, neither printmakers nor print audiences ever mistook him for a military president. "War council" prints *(Figure 3)* took care to present Lincoln as a civilian magistrate, not a commander-in-chief. He could be shown conferring with generals and admirals, but even when shown sitting on a rock in an outdoor setting meant to suggest the battlefield, Lincoln was always depicted garbed in his trademark frock coat, white shirt, and black tie. He seemed to be inquiring, but not necessarily commanding.

From the onset of his presidency, Davis was viewed differently by printmakers in both the South and the North, in pictures that inevitably re-enforced his connection to George Washington. When, for example, lithographer C. P. May of New York portrayed *The Officers of the C[onfederate] S[tates] Army & Navy*, Davis's picture was placed squarely among the bust portraits of the men in uniform. No attempt was made, certainly not in the title of the print, to separate him from his military subordinates. He was one of them.

This status was even more blatantly exploited in *Jefferson Davis and His Generals (Figure 4)*, in which the commander-in-chief was not only shown with his military commanders, but in full uniform—a first among command equals. And even after printmak-

ers learned quite a few things about the Confederate high command—that Lee and Jackson had grown beards, for example, and more importantly, that Davis had never donned a uniform to lead them—they updated the image only peripherally: giving beards to Lee and Jackson, and changing the color of the uniforms from Union blue to Confederate gray. But Davis remained front and center, fully garbed for military action.

The man and his iconographical hour truly met at Bull Run. In late July 1861, word began to spread through the Confederate capital that Davis had left Richmond for the vicinity of Manassas, where the two armies stood face to face. "I always thought he would avail himself of his prerogative as commander-in-chief, and direct in person the most important operations in the field," Confederate war clerk John B. Jones wrote in his diary. "I...believe he will gain great glory in this first mighty conflict."[15]

Three days later the Confederate president's wife burst into her friend Mary Chesnut's room and breathlessly reported: "A great battle had been fought—Jeff Davis led the centre, Joe Johnston the right wing, Beauregard the left wing of the army." Davis, Mrs. Chesnut later confided in her diary, seemed "greedy for military fame." But she was in the minority. One Southern newspaper referred to Davis "our noble warrior President."[16]

When Mrs. Chesnut published her diary years later, her critical comment was expunged. By then the myth of Davis's dramatic appearance at Manassas had been punctuated by the widely disseminated Hoyer & Ludwig print of *President Jefferson Davis. Arriving in the Field of Battle at Bull's Run.* It gave the indelible impression that the commander-in-chief was personally responsible for the Confederacy's first great military success.

In truth, Davis had arrived near to the scene of the action by train, not on horseback, and was told at first that his army had suffered a major defeat. He saw only the smoke and dust of distant fighting, but after commandeering a horse and riding out closer to the field of action—which by then had shifted farther away—he learned that Union forces, not Confederate, had been

routed. The battle was all but over. There is certainly no evidence that Davis wore a uniform that day, as the print suggested, nor any reason to believe that his arrival played any part in rallying dispirited troops.

When he returned to Richmond, however, Davis merely "alluded to his own appearance on the field...in a delicate manner," according to war clerk Jones. In other words, he probably did little to deny reports that he had led the army. Although Davis eventually did correct the myth of his appearance at Bull Run in his autobiography, the book did not appear for twenty years. Which may explain why the loyal clerk Jones worked himself into "a passion" when he first read in the local press "a dispatch from...Manassas stating that the President did not arrive upon the field until the victory was won; and therefore did not participate in the battle at all. From the President's own dispatch...we had conceived the idea that he...had directed the principal operations in the field." Jones' first instinct was not to doubt Davis, but to express the hope that "another paper ought to be established in Richmond, that would do justice to the President."[17]

Only later did Jones learn "that the abused correspondent had been pretty nearly correct in his statement. The battle had been won, and the enemy were flying from the field before the President appeared." But he quickly added: "The people were well pleased with their President." Davis eventually told the full truth about Bull Run, but he clung tenaciously to the military image he had cultivated. As the anti-Davis Richmond *Whig* complained in March 1864:

> The President never for a moment relinquished his rights as Commander-in-Chief.... This earth holds not the human being more jealous of his constitutional rights than Mr. Davis, and among those rights that to which he clings with death-like tenacity is well-known to be the supreme and exclusive control of military operations.

Such insistence on full control may ultimately have hampered

the Confederate war effort. One diarist complained bitterly that Davis, a onetime secretary of war, spent far too much time on details and was much too rigid and authoritarian. But such details were irrelevant to the forging of his martial image at a time when the Confederacy was under attack. Besides, as yet another diarist confided: "I have long ago...expressed my conviction that the President is not endowed with military genius, *but who would have done better?*"[18]

In terms of ability to inspire troops with equestrian grace, real or imagined, Abraham Lincoln was no match for Jefferson Davis. A few weeks before Bull Run, Mary Chesnut conceded of Davis: "His worse [sic] enemy will concede that he is a consummate rider, graceful and easy in the saddle." Around the very same time, a New Yorker wrote directly to Lincoln to complain: "Soldiers write home to their friends in this town with reference to their disappointment in your bearing and manners when reviewing them." The critic insisted: "You ought to assume some dignity...even though your breeding has not been military."[19]

If Lincoln subsequently learned to inspire his soldiers in review, no pictorial evidence survives. The only important contemporary print to show him on horseback was as outlandish in its way as the print of Davis at Bull Run. *Mr. Lincoln, Residence and House* purported to show him returning home from his 1860 presidential campaign. But Lincoln had never left his home to campaign to begin with. Nor had he grown his famous beard, shown there in defiance of chronology, until after the votes were counted.

The pro-Confederate Baltimore artist Adalbert Volck may have come closer to evoking Lincoln's lowly status as equestrian hero in late 1861 with his brilliant etching *(Figure 5)* caricaturing Lincoln and General Benjamin Butler as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza, tilting against both the unexpectedly robust Confederate military resistance, and in a way at the unexpectedly robust image of its quasi-military commander-in-chief.

Even the supposedly pro-Lincoln print by Charles Magnus, *After a Little While (Figure 6)*, did not quite make Lincoln look

Figure 5 Adalbert Johann Volck, *Lincoln and [Benjamin F.] Butler as Don Quixote and Sancho Panza.* Etching, Baltimore, ca. 1862-1864. (Harold Holzer)

comfortable in the saddle, even though it depicted a tiny figure of Davis below, slumping visibly as he glimpses preparations for the execution of a "Southern Fanatic" from a gallows labeled "higher law." This is a difficult image to parse. While it cautions against the radicalism of both Southern secessionists and Northern abolitionists, the print warns against Union overconfidence as well. Its very title, "After a Little While," suggested the need for patience.

In their way, such prints were critical of both Davis and Lincoln. But it was mild criticism indeed compared to what other printmakers were producing at the time. Few American leaders were ever as unmercifully lampooned. Not surprisingly, the most hostile anti-Davis graphics came from the North, and the most hostile anti-Lincoln work from the South.

Figure 6 Charles Magnus & Co., *After a Little While. Union Henceforth Now And For Ever.* Lithograph, New York, ca 1861. (The Old Print Shop, New York)

A typical Confederate cartoon mocked Lincoln's shortcomings as commander-in-chief, portraying him as a pathetic puppet master who has been forced to shelve his listless marionettes—a long string of failed generals like McClellan and Burnside—but with foolish pride unveils his latest doll, "Fighting Joe" Hooker, destined to fail as well. Tackling directly, and slanderously, the issue

Figure 7 Benjamin H. Day, *The Emblem of the Free. The Traitor's Dream.* Lithograph, New York, 1865. (Library of Congress)

of Lincoln's personal bravery, another artist dressed Lincoln in the old scotch tam and military cloak disguise and depicted him fleeing from the first feeble cannonball of battle. The sheet music cover was of course designed of course to remind viewers of Lincoln's dark hour at Baltimore.

To a less subtle Confederate printmaker, Lincoln deserved execution for his crimes against the South. In the crude but venomous picture, *The Fate of the Rail Splitter*, Lincoln is about to be hanged, presumably for treason, from a scaffold constructed of Lincolnian log rails. Hampered by the feeblest portraiture, its artist also apparently believed Lincoln was still clean-shaven—an indication, perhaps, of how few Northern-made prints found their way south once the war began.

The most extreme of these primitive pictures, published in the *Southern Illustrated News*, suggested that behind Lincoln's avuncular mask lay Satan himself. His sin lies at his feet: a scroll dated January 1, 1863—the day the Emancipation Proclamation took

effect. Crude as this rendering may be, the artist added a subtle touch to identify the setting: the ugly stump of the unfinished Washington Monument. The subsidiary message is that Lincoln had been untrue to the Washington spirit that Davis had so successfully evoked among Southern image-makers.

When it came to treason pictures, however, Northern artists far out-produced their Confederate counterparts, and did so with considerably more skill. In *Jeff Davis on the Right Platform, or the last "act of seccession"* for example, a sniveling Davis was shown going to his death wrapped in the Confederate flag, lamenting: "O dear! O dear! I don't really want to secede this way." Traitors were seldom shown dying bravely.

Davis also appeared prominently in Benjamin H. Day, Jr.'s *The Emblem of the Free (Figure 7)*, showing the devil—this time decidedly not Lincoln—placing a crown on the sleeping Confederate president's head. Here the Washington image was employed against Davis. The ghost of the first president looks on in despair, pointing to the goddess of liberty at center, and to the Revolutionary War veterans huddled in the cold at left, to remind Davis and viewers alike of the sacrifice that had been required to create the Union. In the words of the song that accompanied the picture, "The Traitor's Dream," Davis is warned that he has in fact soiled Washington's heritage:

> The shade of WASHINGTON
>
> Condemns you from above;
> His calm, majestic brow
> Denotes his country's love;
> E'en Royalty could not.
> With all its tinsel glare,
> Induce him to betray
> Our nation's banner fair...
>
> Beneath those brilliant stripes
> Your fathers fought and bled;
> Resplendently they shone
> Above each warrior's head.

Then, traitor, pause! beware!
A felon's death will be
Yours if you dare destroy
That Emblem of the Free!

A similar assault awaited Davis in *The Soldier's Song—Unionism vs. Copperheadism*, promoted by Ohio printmakers Smith & Swinney as "a token of disapprobation and contempt of Home Traitors." The Confederate president was not mentioned by name in the vilifying poem that accompanied this picture, but he was portrayed as the mother of all Copperheads: a huge snake topped by Davis's head, coiled around a symbolic Southern palmetto tree, and staring into the barrel of a Union cannon.

Yet another clever print *(Figure 8)* confronted Davis's military image with deft comic flair, and a talent for trompe l'oeil caricature. The trick print revealed one image right-side up, and another upside-down. Looked at one way, it was called *Jeff. Davis going to War,* an excessively armored tin soldier ready for battle:

With lion heart and frantic mien,
The warrior seeks the battle scene.
To risk his precious blood and fight
For glory and his vaunted right.

Upside down, however, the viewer saw *Jeff. returning from War,* a downcast army mule, of whom it was said, perhaps to fight cowardice charges against Lincoln with similar slanders against Davis:

...When he hears the cannon roar,
And views the dying in his gore,
His courage fails and then, alas!
He homeward travels like an ass.

Thus, by the end of 1861, America's two Civil War presidents had developed startlingly different images. Davis had evolved into a warrior-president—a traitor in the North to be sure, but the second coming of Washington in the South. And Lincoln had progressed in prints from railsplitter to coward, later the states-

Jeff. Davis going to War.
Jeff. returning from War
AN
Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1861, by E. Rogers,
In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States,
In and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

Figure 8 E Rogers, *Jeff. Davis going to War/Jeff. returning from War.* Lithograph, 1861. (Library of Congress)

PUNCH, OR THE LONDON CHARIVARI.—May 9, 1863.
Hurrah for Charleston! that's another to me
THE GREAT "CANNON GAME."
Abe Lincoln (aside). "DARN'D IF HE AIN'T SCORED AGIN!—WISH I COULD MAKE A FEW WINNING HAZARDS FOR A CHANGE."

Figure 9 John Tenniel, *The Great "Cannon Game."* Wood engraving, published in London *Punch,* May 9, 1863. (The Lincoln Museum)

man-heir to the Washington tradition, but no Washington himself. Both had been exalted in flattering pictures, and assaulted in abusive ones. But there was a significant difference. Davis regularly received pictorial abuse at the hands of Northern printmakers, and Lincoln from Southern printmakers. But while Lincoln was also routinely maligned in prints published in his own section—like the cartoon attacking him for allegedly responding to horrifying casualty reports with another funny story—Davis completely escaped pictorial criticism at home.

It was not that he was above criticism there, at least of the written and verbal kind. But Davis was fortunate that his image began to tarnish most just as the Confederate printmaking industry proved able to illustrate it least.

What might now have become in the graphic arts a "great cannon game," in the words of the title to a cartoon *(Figure 9)* pub-

lished in London *Punch* in 1863—an epic struggle for image predominance between two concurrently serving American presidents—instead became a landslide victory for one, when printmaking itself all but ceased to exist in the country of the other. If Davis's side was "overmatched" in "the cannon game," they became even more outdistanced in the picture game. Paper, ink, and artists became even scarcer in the Confederacy than bullets and uniforms. Demand for Davis's image may well have persisted; supply did not.[20]

Dwindling Confederate manpower required that all able-bodied Southern men serve in the military, and printmakers were not exempted. Those few who remained in civilian life were assigned to the production of Confederate stamps and currency, which soon boasted the only new images of Davis in circulation. As shortages in engravers and lithographers compounded the chronic shortages of paper and ink, the once-robust *Confederate Illustrated News* took to advertising desperately for printmakers. None stepped forward, and the illustrated weekly soon died out.[21]

So did separate-sheet Confederate printmaking. The once-thriving printmaking center of New Orleans fell into Union hands by 1862. In Baltimore, anti-Lincoln, pro-Confederate printmakers like Adalbert Volck were fully capable of condemning Lincoln in prints like *Worship of the North*, showing the Union sacrificing a human life on the altar of "Negro worship, spirit rapping, free love, witchburning, socialism...[and] atheism." But Baltimore remained under Union control, and Volck's brilliant portfolios were secretly published for but a few underground subscribers. They enjoyed widespread circulation only after the war ended.[22]

The widening chasm in image-making power became especially apparent in early 1863, when, coincidentally, artists arrived in the respective American capitals to paint portraits of each president at midstream. James Robertson produced a reassuring, almost defiant painting of Davis. And Edward Marchant composed a dignified, white-tie likeness of Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation. Because Southern printmaking had

all but ceased to exist, however, Robertson's inspiring likeness went virtually unseen. But in the publishing hub of Philadelphia, Marchant's picture was engraved by John Sartain, and became a best-seller.[23]

As the document Lincoln holds in that print suggests, publishing power was not the only factor to tilt the balance of image dominance to Lincoln; there was also the exercise of presidential power, specifically the Emancipation Proclamation. With a single stroke of his pen, Lincoln expanded the parameters of his place in both history and iconography. In prints, he was no longer just an embattled wartime president, but a modern Moses, his image now sanctified by inclusion in the caption of one such print of the words from Leviticus: "Proclaim liberty throughout the land." Whatever hope Davis still harbored of maintaining his tenuous link to George Washington began to fade. Southern printmaking was all but extinct, while Northern printmakers came to see the "second Declaration of Independence" and Lincoln in much the same way, and in much the same designs, in which they saw the first Declaration of Independence and Washington.

Lincoln distanced himself further from the non-elected Confederate president by seeking re-election in the midst of civil war. Predictably, his candidacy unleashed another torrent of image-making, much of it like the caricatures, portraits, and posters that had proliferated four years earlier. Again, a substantial portion was critical, like *The Grave of the Union*, showing Lincoln presiding over the mass burial of the Constitution, Union, Habeas Corpus, Free Speech and Free Press. Such prints typically featured stock characters who found their way into most anti-Lincoln imagery of the period: the controversial Horace Greeley, Henry Ward Beecher, and William H. Seward, to name a few.

Similarly, caricature critical of Lincoln's Democratic challenger, George B. McClellan, began featuring its own recurring cast of principals, the suggestion of their rise under a McClellan presidency designed to frighten the voting public. What set this body of images apart was that much of it featured a sworn enemy of the

Figure 10 Currier & Ives, *"Your Plan and Mine."* Lithograph, New York, 1864. (The Lincoln Museum)

Union: Jefferson Davis himself. Ironically, it was in this genre that Davis finally found his way into campaign graphics—not as a candidate, but as an issue: the living symbol of peace at any price. It was arguably the most remarkable development in Davis image-making, although few people in the South ever saw the results.[24]

Davis would now be seen as one of the supporters holding aloft the Democratic Party's rickety peace platform, which barely supports its ironically military candidate for president—whom Davis supports as "my last hope." In a variation on the theme, McClellan was shown kneeling to Davis, dressed for Louis Prang's print, *Democracy*, as an evil Southern planter, slave whip in hand, knife in belt, the hopelessness of his inhumane cause betrayed by his tattered trousers. McClellan, clutching an olive branch, whimpers: "We should like to have Union and Peace, dear Mr. Davis, but if such is not your pleasure then please state your terms for a friendly separation."

To Currier & Ives *(Figure 10)*, the contrast between candidates

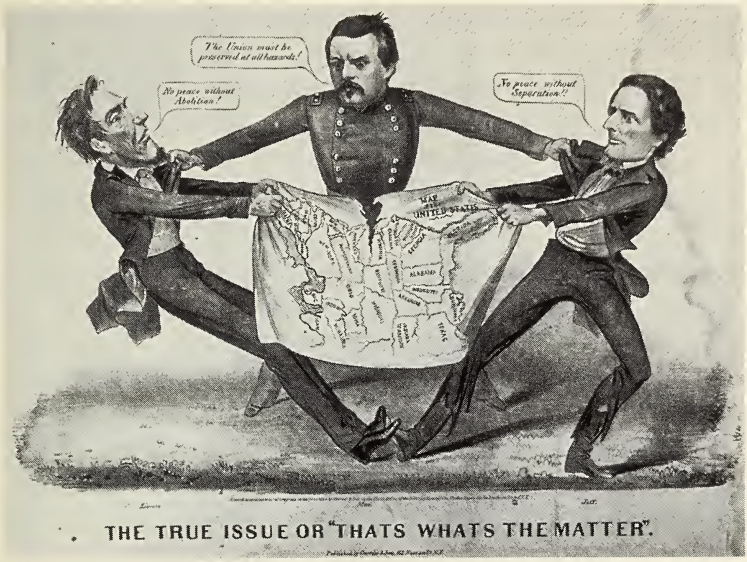
The Union must be preserved at all hazards!
No peace without Abolition!
No peace without Separation!!
THE TRUE ISSUE OR "THATS WHATS THE MATTER".

Figure 11 Currier & Ives, *The True Issue or "What's the Matter."* Lithograph, New York, 1864. (Library of Congress)

was stark. Under McClellan, the Union would surrender and hand over to the knife-wielding Davis the representative free black soldier who had already fought for his country. "[I] am glad to hear," Davis declares provocatively, "that you are willing to be governed once more by your Southern masters." Illustrating the Republican plan, a triumphant Lincoln holds a beaten Davis at bayonet point, declaring: "Your unconditional submission to the Government and laws is all that I demand... the great & magnanimous Nation that I represent have no desire for revenge." Davis can only admit his "madness and folly" and submit.

Not that Currier & Ives were exclusively pro-Lincoln. Reaffirming commercialism as the principal impetus for its Civil War printmaking, the New York firm also published *The True Issue (Figure 11)*, suggesting that both Lincoln and Davis would destroy the Union rather than compromise on secession or abolition. Here McClellan is portrayed as the reasonable man, trying

desperately to hold the fractured country, and its improvident leaders, together. One imagines that if commerce had continued to flourish between sections during the war, printmakers like Currier & Ives would have willingly provided flattering portraits of Davis to his image-deprived admirers in the Confederacy. Nothing doomed the Davis image in the South more than its isolation from the printmaking centers of the North.

To a majority of the North, the 1864 election remained, at least in prints, a battle between Union, symbolized in an M. W. Siebert print by Lincoln, the triumph of the workingman, and education for African-American children; and Disunion, with McClellan and Davis collaborating in an unholy alliance to restore slavery.

Lincoln won the 1864 race for image dominance just as he won the election. Now as Emancipator and second-term president of a country whose image-makers churned out prints in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, and Cincinnati, he became the nation's principal icon. The sheer proliferation of his image had transformed him in only three years from an unknown western politician into the most instantly recognizable figure of his age. The best that could be said of the Davis image was that it had faded from view—that is it was no longer produced in once-thriving Confederate publishing centers, no longer produced in the North, rarely produced in Europe, and even more rarely imported through the blockade when foreign-made prints were produced. The most telling evidence of the utter collapse of Confederate printmaking, and with it the Davis image, was the complete absence of prints celebrating one of the president's finest moments: his personal intervention to quell the Richmond bread riots of January 1863. Not a single print was ever issued to commemorate his dramatic plea that day to end lawlessness on the streets of the Confederate capital.

When Jefferson Davis finally did return to prominence in popular prints, it was not as a symbol of Southern rights, a Washington, a commander, or a peacemaker. Instead, in the greatest irony of all Civil War iconography, he was portrayed leav-

ing office exactly as Lincoln had been portrayed *entering* office: in disguise. The fate that awaited him proved even worse than that which had greeted Lincoln after Baltimore. At least the disguise that image-makers had invented for Lincoln in 1861 was male, not female.

The exact details of the event that inspired this final burst of Davis prints have been in dispute almost from the moment it was first reported in May 1865. One thing is certain: while Lincoln lived he did nothing to discourage Davis from fleeing Richmond. "He ought to clear out...escape the country," he told one associate. And to his private secretary, Lincoln confided: "I hope he will mount a fleet horse, reach the shores of the Gulf of Mexico, and drive so far into its waters that we shall never see him again." Obligingly, Davis escaped Richmond ahead of Union invading forces. On May 10, federal cavalry caught up with the fugitive in Irwinsville, Georgia.[25]

But Davis did not stand and fight. In the dark, he picked up Mrs. Davis's sleeveless overcoat by mistake, and as he was preparing to flee his tent, he admitted in his autobiography, "my wife thoughtfully threw over my head and shoulders a shawl." Davis got only 15 or 20 yards before he was seized, and to his captors, the first, last, and only president of the Confederacy looked to be in women's disguise. Days later, the New York Herald was reporting on Davis's "ignominious surrender."[26]

Within weeks, the "disguise" somehow transformed itself in the popular mind—exactly as Lincoln's soft hat had metamorphosed into a Scottish tam—through the graphic arts. On June 3, 1865, *Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper* crossed the dividing line between fact and fiction by portraying Davis fleeing in a dress and bonnet.

Soon, separate sheet prints were flooding the North, portraying Davis in hoopskirts, featuring titles like *Jeff's last shift* and *The Chas-ed Old Lady of the Confederacy*. In a matter of months, Davis's lifelong, aristocratic reputation was wrecked and replaced by the image, in diarist George Templeton Strong's words, of an emas-

"Don't provoke the President, or some of you may get hurt!!"
Published by HILTON & Co 124 Nassau St. N.Y.
THE HEAD OF THE CONFEDERACY ON A NEW BASE.

Figure 12 Hilton and Company, *The Head of the Confederacy on a New Base.* Lithograph, New York, 1865. (The Lincoln Museum)

culated coward "in the cumbrous disguise of hooped skirts"—a coward in drag![27]

"His last official act," Currier & Ives's version of *The Capture of Jeff Davis* taunted, was "the adoption of a new rebel uniform"—women's clothes. Mackenzie & Gardner of St. Louis mocked Davis as "our erring sister caught at last," wearing full skirts an a bonnet as he cries: "I thought your Government too magnanimous to hunt down women and children."

Worse humiliation came from J. L. Magee of New York, whose view of *Hoop Skirts & Southern Chivalry* was wickedly promoted as "the only true Picture of the Capture." "She's the bearded lady," declares a soldier who lifts up her shawl, while one who looks under her hoopskirts reports: "Look what long boots and spurs she's got." Four years earlier, a print had introduced Lincoln by suggesting his affinity for a Barnum character, the "What is It." Now a taunting soldier unmasking the half-man, half-woman

cries: "Where's Barnum?" Davis himself was now the sideshow attraction. And it was perhaps no coincidence that all three captors in the Magee print—especially the general holding his rifle on Davis—bore an uncanny resemblance to Abraham Lincoln.

Such pictures, featuring Lincolnesque characters unmasking a disgraced Davis, could also satisfy those who believed that the Confederate president had masterminded the plot to murder Lincoln only a few weeks earlier. "Evidence is in the hands of our government," one preacher told his flock from the pulpit, "which will prove him to have been an accomplice...in this plot of damnable guilt." The allegations were repeated in churches throughout the North. And prints of Davis's capture that portrayed him clutching a knife were meant to suggest not that he had put up a brave fight to prevent capture, but that he was Booth's co-conspirator in the murder of Lincoln.[28]

The cartoon character Davis could call his new image a "blessing in disguise" in a second Currier & Ives interpretation of "the capture of an unprotected female." But the real Davis insisted in his autobiography that the entire story was a "lie." In her own memoirs, Varina Davis was a bit more elusive. She vehemently denied the story of the female disguise, of course, but with a jab at Lincoln and his own negative image, she added that to conceal her husband, "I would have availed myself of a Scotch cap and cloak." An outraged Richard S. Trapier, an Episcopalian minister from Virginia, may have understood the meaning of the new images better than most of his contemporaries. To Trapier it was nothing less than pictorial revenge for the glut of pictures that had mocked Lincoln before his inauguration. As he put it:

> Look here—taken [in] woman's clothes...rubbish—stuff and nonsense. If Jeff Davis has not the pluck of a true man, then there is no courage left on earth.... Something, you see, was due to the manner of Lincoln and the Scotch cap that he hid is ugly face with in that express car when he was rushed through Baltimore in the night. It is that escapade of their man Lincoln that set them on making up

Figure 13 F. Hartwich after Gustave Bartsch, *Lincoln in City Point* [sic]. Lithograph, printed by J. Hesse, published by Oswald Seehagen, Berlin, ca. 1865. (Library of Congress)

the waterproof cloak story of Jeff Davis.[29]

But the damage was done. What harsher fate could befall a leader who had emphasized character and dignity than emasculation? Hilton & Co. of New York demonstrated how cruelly that fate had befallen Davis with *The Head of the Confederacy on a New Base*, a depiction that practically constitutes a rape scene *(Figure 12)*. Davis is upended, his skirts pulled back, and as he falls backwards, legs apart, he is confronted by a soldier brandishing both a pistol and an upthrust sword—two symbols of masculine aggression. And in case there were any lingering doubts about Davis's sex, the sword protruding between his own legs as he topples over was surely meant to parody the male organ.

At the very time such prints were proliferating through the North—and undoubtedly filtering into the South as well, once surrender and peace re-opened commerce between the sec-

Figure 14 Louis Kurz, *Behold Oh! America, Your Sons. The greatest among men.* Lithograph, copyrighted by E. Shogren, published by Chas. Shober, Chicago, 1865. (Library of Congress)

tions—Abraham Lincoln was transfigured into national sainthood. Killed by an assassin as Davis was fleeing South, Lincoln's martyrdom was observed in dozens of reverential prints rushed to market to satisfy the public's hunger for depictions of the tragedy. Violent assassination pictures would be displayed in the home like crucifixion scenes. Companion deathbed prints, crowned by the summoning ghost of Washington himself, would reassure mourners that the preserver of the Union had been welcomed into heaven by its founder. Dozens of variations were made available to the public within weeks of the tragedy. And there were more martyr portraits to come.

Now Lincoln would finally, retrospectively, be portrayed as the conquering hero of the Civil War, marching modestly into Richmond, still the civilian, or riding triumphantly into City

Point *(Figure 13)*, in an odd German-made lithograph surely meant to celebrate Lincoln's arrival in the Confederate capital instead. And there could be no doubt now that Lincoln had not only regained his claim to the mantle of Washington, but had emerged as his peer in the national pantheon *(Figure 14)*, having "saved" what Washington "made." In the "coming days," one Lincoln eulogist said of the founder and preserver of the Union, "their portraits shall hang side by side." No prophesy about the American graphic arts was ever more quickly fulfilled.[30]

Of course, Jefferson Davis could never hope to achieve the image transformation that Abraham Lincoln earned with his assassination, a return to dominance prefigured by the publication of "The Federal Phoenix" in London *Punch* soon after his re-election. But in prints Davis proved even more resilient; he was the Lazarus of Civil War iconography. Although his image died aborning with the decline of Confederate printmaking while the Confederate cause lived, once the Cause was lost it virtually rose from the dead.

Gibson & Co. of Cincinnati was perhaps the first Northern firm to recognize Davis's post-war commercial potential. Its 1865 lithograph, *The Last Act of the Drama of Secession*, was the only known separate sheet print to treat the flight of Jefferson Davis without malice. Instead, Davis was shown in a dramatic torchlit scene taking leave of his despondent military family to keep the Confederate flag flying in exile. Surely this singular image could not compete with the sheer volume of hoopskirt depictions that flooded the country at the same time. But it may have been of more long-lasting importance, if only to re-open the national market for heroic images of Davis. Once Northern printmakers realized that Southerners still yearned for such portraits, they gladly filled the need.

Sometimes the competition for the reopened Southern market had comic consequences of which audiences remained blissfully unaware. One example could trace its origins almost perversely to A. H. Ritchie's influential engraving of Lincoln reading the pre-

Figure 15 Thomas Kelly after the original engraving by A. H. Ritchie, *President Lincoln and His Cabinet/With General Grant in the Council Chamber of the Whitehouse.* Lithograph, New York, 1866. (The Lincoln Museum)

liminary Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet. Few images ever did more to illustrate—and perhaps enhance—Lincoln's enduring reputation as a liberator. According to testimony by its publisher, "nearly 30,000 impressions were printed from the steel plate," so many that the plate eventually wore out. It was an enormous best-seller.[31]

The print proved so popular that it also inspired unauthorized copies whose creators were emboldened by the period's lax copyright enforcement. Typical was Thomas Kelly's *President Lincoln and His Cabinet/ With General Grant in the Council Chamber of the Whitehouse (Figure 15)*, issued in New York in 1866. Here a few of the cabinet ministers were moved, Grant added, and the scene transformed from the first reading of the Proclamation to a war council. But it was hardly as audacious a piracy as Kelly's second variation—*Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet. With General Lee in the*

Figure 16 Thomas Kelly after the original engraving by A. H. Ritchie, *Jefferson Davis and His Cabinet. With General Lee in the Council Chamber at Richmond.* Lithograph, New York, 1866. (Library of Congress)

Council Chamber at Richmond (Figure 16). It probably did not occur to Southern buyers that the room portrayed was unmistakably the Union White House, that the heads of Davis's ministers now sat atop the bodies of Lincoln's, or that Davis's own head now rested on Lincoln's frame. But both Davis and his admirers might well have objected had they known that the document he was shown clutching in his right hand was actually the Emancipation Proclamation.

The Davis image lived on as Davis lived on. In one last example of the mirror image phenomenon, Davis now did what Lincoln had done in 1861, perhaps in a similar effort to soften his harsh image, or what remained of it. He grew a full beard to replace the devilish-looking goatee that had so long been his trademark. And he aged in popular prints into a benign-looking old man, an effective counterpoint to his own intensely unrepentant views about secession and the war.

At last he was shown, too, with his family, given by Chicago

Figure 17 Kimmel & Forster, *The Outbreak of the Rebellion in the United States, 1861.* Lithograph, New York, 1865. (The Lincoln Museum)

lithographers Kurz & Allison in 1890 the same, softer, private image that had for 25 years been granted to Lincoln and his family in countless such pictures. Kurz & Allison's similar-looking Lincoln family group, produced a few years earlier, may even have served as the model for the Davis version. If so, it was the most fitting mirror image of all, since both Davis and Lincoln had in common the wartime loss of beloved young sons.

Further proof of Davis's rebounding image could be glimpsed, too, in a series of bizarre allegorical history prints by Kimmel & Forster of New York, that may have sweetened the bitter history of war to better appeal to Davis's admirers as well as Lincoln's. The first of these, *The Outbreak of the Rebellion (Figure 17)*, seemed to propose that greedy capitalists, not hot-headed secessionists, had brought on the war. Davis was included in the complicated scene, portrayed under a palmetto tree around which a serpent coiled. But his image was so small, and placed so deep in the background, that it seemed almost an afterthought. Davis not only escaped blame, he may have escaped notice.

Figure 18 Kimmel & Forster, *The Last Offer of Reconciliation. In Remembrance of President Lincoln. "The door is open to all."* Lithograph, New York, 1865. (The Lincoln Museum)

As for the publisher's equally unusual companion piece, *The Last Offer of Reconciliation (Figure 18)*, it implied only that Davis could have avoided further bloodshed at the end of the war by accepting Lincoln's invitation into a symbolic, eagle-festooned temple of liberty. Davis's gesture indicates that he rejects this offer, yet he is portrayed as dignified, not defiant. Such prints were principally designed to enhance Lincoln's reputation. But merely by allowing Davis to be portrayed with Lincoln side-by-side as wartime equals, these prints subliminally encouraged the reconstruction of Davis's shattered image.

And shattered it certainly had been, a fate vivified in an 1862 card photograph of a "neglected picture" of Davis—a picture whose glass has been broken by its presumably disgusted owner.

But the Davis image rose again. He remained a regional hero, of course, while Lincoln blossomed into national, even international fame. A substantial number of Northern-made prints continued to depict Davis as a traitor, while Lincoln entered the realm of national sainthood. And of course, the few examples presented here do not truly reflect the preponderance of Lincoln images throughout the war, and on into the 20th Century. There were countless more Lincoln prints than Davis prints, and after 1865 the image dominance was all but overwhelming. But Davis and his image stubbornly endured, if only in the hearts of his most loyal followers.

In 1881, not long after his return to partial image respectability, Jefferson Davis published his memoirs. Readers may have failed to notice his brief but almost poignant admission that once he had feared the burdens of the presidency because so few American presidents had ever "left the office as happy men." He knew "how darkly the shadows gathered around the setting sun" of former presidents, "and how eagerly the multitude would turn to gaze upon another orb...rising to take its place in the political firmament."

"He must, indeed, be a self-confident man," Davis concluded, "who could hope to fill the chair of Washington" and feel "that the sacrifice of self had been compensated by the service rendered to his country."[32]

Davis never lacked for self-confidence. He could, like Lincoln, imagine himself a second George Washington. But in the end it was Lincoln who seized "the chair of Washington" as his own, and Lincoln who made the ultimate sacrifice for his country. It was Lincoln whom the multitudes turned to gaze upon, and it was Lincoln who came to dominate the political, historical, and pictorial firmament he had once shared with his mirror-image Confederate counterpart. So Davis had predicted. The father of his short-lived country fared far better in popular prints, and for far longer, than we have previously appreciated, in a country that ran out of paper and ink long before it ran out of patriotism. And while he lived, Lincoln probably fared worse than he deserved,

the victim of a robust Northern printmaking industry as eager to sell caricatures to his critics as portraits to his admirers.

In a way, Lincoln's image had risen from that of coward in disguise to that of military hero and modern-day Washington. Davis's image evolved precisely in reverse: from that of military hero and modern-day Washington, to that of coward in disguise. In the end, Civil War iconography had room for many famous men, but only one monument *(Figure 19)*.

(The author wishes to thank Professors Mark E. Neely, Jr. and Gabor S. Boritt, in collaboration with whom much of the research on the Davis image was conducted in 1986; and Lincoln scholar Frank J. Williams, for his advice on the final manuscript.)

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